

RIEMA Executive Director J. David Smith along with the below mentioned Mayors and Town Managers of the most heavily flooded communities are recommending that those most affected by the recent storm and subsequent flooding should call 2-1-1 with any questions. United Way 2-1-1 specialists will take calls and help citizens complete damage forms.

Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian, Cranston Mayor Allan Fung, West Warwick Town Manager James Thomas, and Coventry Town Manager Thomas Hoover also urged residents and business owners to use the system to report damage information.

The municipal leaders said that information will be critical in helping RIEMA to submit as complete and as comprehensive a report as possible to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which will consider whether to release funds to Rhode Island in the flood's aftermath. Hundreds of businesses and homeowners in the four communities were affected and/or displaced by the flooding. As of this afternoon, many areas were still submerged and some businesses remained closed.

"The statewide 2-1-1 system has been extremely useful for citizens who are looking for help with any number of problems," Avedisian said. "The staff there is very knowledgeable. By using this as a clearinghouse for damage reports, we'll have a comprehensive listing from every affected community, and 2-1-1 staff will also be able to point businesses and residents to resources to help them during this time."

"It is important for people to realize that there is somewhere to go for answers when they are faced with a weather event of this magnitude," said Fung. "I encourage all those impacted by this latest storm to utilize the 2-1-1 system."

"We encourage all residents and businesses hit by this latest rain storm to provide information which will assist our regional communities in receiving the federal assistance we need to help rebuild our homes and businesses," Thomas said. "Communicating information about our damage is critical to the success of this program."

"Our town has sustained considerable infrastructure damage, particularly on our roadways,"

Hoover said. “We are working cooperatively with state and federal officials and want to do everything we can to ensure that the Town of Coventry and other communities receive federal reimbursement.”

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, and local resources to protect the public during disasters and emergencies. RIEMA helps develop plans for effective response to all hazards, trains emergency personnel, provides information to families and communities, and assists in recovery from disaster losses. You can learn more about RIEMA by visiting the RIEMA homepage at www.riema.ri.gov